

Timber company fined after employee severs thumb

A timber company has been fined after an employee suffered serious injuries when his thumb came into contact with a saw blade.

High Wycombe Magistrates' Court heard that on 13 February 2019, Maceij Rudnicki, was setting up the floor mounted band resaw for a production run when his hand was drawn towards the blade with the power feed on. The thumb on his right hand was severed when it made contact with an unguarded blade.

An investigation by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) found that Watford Timber Company Limited had failed to take the machine out of use when the guard stopped working because it did not have adequate arrangements in place to check and monitor their machines to ensure that guards and other protective devices remained in good working order.

Watford Timber Company Limited of Olds Approach, Tolpits Lane, Watford pleaded guilty to breaching Regulation 11(1) of the Provision and Use of Work Equipment Regulations 1998 and Regulation 5 of The Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. The company was fined £13,400 and ordered to pay costs of £5,358.05.

Speaking after the hearing, HSE inspector Nigel Fitzhugh, said: "The incident could have been easily avoided had the company taken the machine out of use and repaired the guard as soon as it became inoperable. Employers must ensure that machinery guarding is kept in good working order."

Notes to Editors:

1. The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) is Britain's national regulator for workplace health and safety. We prevent work-related death, injury and ill health through regulatory actions that range from influencing behaviours across whole industry sectors through to targeted interventions on individual businesses. These activities are supported by globally recognised scientific expertise. www.hse.gov.uk
2. More about the legislation referred to in this case can be found at: www.legislation.gov.uk/
3. HSE news releases are available at <http://press.hse.gov.uk>